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ABSTRACT

The literature on reading aloud indicates a positive result when children read aloud with others. Reading aloud is found to enhance a student's vocabulary, to familiarize students with language patterns and sentence structure, to help students develop listening skills and increased attention spans, and to build children's curiosity in reading. Children's creativity and competence were closely related to the quantity of parent-child reading in the home, which can enhance the child's early reading capabilities. Educators continue to recognize that children who come from homes in which children read with parents have an advantage over those students not involved in shared reading, and the difference in these circumstances may be considered a factor in the continual discrepancy of reading proficiencies in schools today. (EF)

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Examination of the Relation of Children Reading Aloud to Others and Reading Proficiency

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Introduction

We are in a third grade classroom and are reading a story aloud. We circle around the room and each child will get a chance to read a given paragraph. The differences in reading ability are very apparent. While some students can read word for word quickly, others struggle on the simplest of consonants and vowels.

Statement of the Problem

This raises the question of what techniques may create the difference between readers of high and low proficiency. Does one such strategy, reading aloud, improve children's reading ability?

Review of the Literature

The following will examine reading aloud with others. As the literature suggests, this technique has proven to be effective in creating proficient readers.

Children Reading Aloud

The tradition of children reading aloud has great intrinsic value. It allows the modeling of syntactic and phonemic language patterns. By hearing words in context, there is an increase is the listener's receptive vocabulary. It works to help children develop listening skills and increases the listener's attention span. The shared experience of reading aloud can also motivate children's desire to read (Hillman, 1975). Reading aloud at an early age allows students to bridge the gap between written and spoken language. It familiarizes children with language patterns, expands vocabulary with the introduction of new words and complex sentence structure. It adds to a child's knowledge of the world. A positive correlation has been found between being read to and reading achievement,

reading readiness, listening skills, and early reading capabilities (Williams, 1986).

Parent-Child Reading

Reading proficiency involves reading aloud in a parent-child-reading interaction. Parent-child reading interactions were administered and assessed. Results revealed a positive relationship between the amount of time a child spent reading aloud with parents and the child's higher level of vocabulary development. Children's creativity and perceived competence was related to both the quantity and quality of parent-child reading (Hale, 1992). Children who become poor readers typically amuse themselves on their own, about 2-3 times a week, while children who become normal readers were read to or shared reading on a daily basis (Chesney, 1995). Educators have recognized that children who come from homes in which storybooks are read have an advantage over those children who are not involved in shared reading. Parents also enhance their children's learning by encouraging the development of several skills which they understand are important to their child's development (McCarthy, 1995). Reading aloud to children gives them an educational head start (Williams, 1986).

Summary

Findings indicate a positive result when children read aloud with others. Reading aloud is found to enhance a student's vocabulary while familiarizing students with language patterns and sentence structure. Reading aloud also helps students develop listening skills while increasing attention span. Reading aloud works to build the child's curiosity in reading. Children's creativity and competence were closely related to the quantity of parent-child reading in the home. This can help to enhance the child's

early reading capabilities. Educators continue to recognize that children who come from homes in which children read with parents have an advantage over those students not involved in shared reading.

Implications

The information above again reinforces the importance of reading aloud with students. The earlier this is started, preferably at the home, the greater the advantage the child will have in school. This shows the need to always have students read aloud stories in the classroom, being sure that all students are given the chance. Reading aloud seems to hold importance in most elementary schools. Most classrooms require 20 minutes of silent reading each day. Students are also encouraged to match this amount of time reading at home. It is continually shown through studies that children's reading abilities improve the more a child reads. It would be wonderful if each child was given the opportunity to read with someone outside the classroom as well as in. This cannot be guaranteed, however, and may be considered a factor in the continual difference of reading proficiencies in our schools.

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